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THE OBSERVATOR.

Home-bred Differences Endanger the Government. The Neceſſity of a Union amongſt all Engliſh *Proteſtants. Proteſtants of all Parties are Members of the Church of* England. *Such as are againſt Union are in a Popiſh Intereſt.*

From Saturday July the 31ſt, to Wednesday Auguſt the 4th, 1703.

Country-m. MAſter *Obſervator*, I was this time at *London*, in Company of ſome very ſerious Men, and I verily believe, good *Chriſtians*, who were with Grief Bewailing the ſad Condition of our Dear Country, labouring under the Preſſure of a War Abroad, and Expoſed to the Deſigns of *Papiſts* at Home, and our Differences among our ſelves not Compoſed, but riſing yet higher; all which are Inſtances of Gods Diſpleaſure, and his Signal Judgments. Pray, Sir, how do the Times look in your Thoughts; what Apprehenſions have you of the Security of our Religion, and the Welfare of our Realm? Let me Entreat you to Afford us a Lecture on that Subject, we ſhall all hearken with a diligent Attention.

Obſ. We have the greateſt Reaſon to believe that God will ſhake Terribly the Earth, becauſe he has already Whet his Sword in Vengeance, and 'tis well for thoſe who have a Refuge from the Power of his Anger. All *Europe* is now Weltring in Blood, and He alone knows how far it may ſpread it ſelf: We in *England* have felt its Judgments, and what is our Confuſion, we have not thereby Learnt Righteouſneſs; ſo that we may reaſonably expect greater Convulſions than we have hitherto met with. The Prime Cauſes of our Impending Judgments are eaſily diſcover'd in the Deluge of Sin, which overſpreads the Face of our Land, and the Secondary Cauſes of Male-Adminiſtration in Government, will never be Charged on ſuch as have done their Duty like true *Engliſhmen*: And now 'tis a Fruitleſs Labour to ſit down and Lament the Diſtreſſed Condition of our Dear Country; 'tis much more our Duty to conſider of Ways and Means for it's Security; and this can be no better done, than by reflecting on the Diſeaſes which have Weak'ned our State, and the Neceſſity of a Cure.

The Laws of *England*, and the Religion of *England*, being the two Eſſential parts of our Conſtitution, ought to be kept Entire: But how can this be done when we have contending Parties among us, who ſtriving for Dominion and Empire, ſome to Lord it over the *Conſciences*, and others over the *Bodies* of Men, do weaken our *Conſtitution*, and make our *State* look with a Languid Aſpect? Theſe are our Enemies, let 'em be of what Party or Perſwaſion ſoever; and theſe do us more Miſchief than all the Confederated Powers of *France*, *Rome*, and *Hell* againſt us. Our Differences in Religion are chiefly Fomented by the *Nonjurant* Clergy, who refuſe to take the Oaths to the *beſt of Queens*, and the *beſt of Governments*; and theſe Men by their continual Clamours for the Church, miſlead the People from their Duty. Now for my part, I can't believe that Man to be of the Church of *England*, who diſowns the Queen, the Head of the Church of *England*; this is juſt ſuch a thing as taking Arms by Her Majeſties Authority againſt Her Majeſties Perſon. In all Ages that I have Read of, we never wanted in *England* ſome Clergymen, ready to diſturb the Peaceful Waters of the Church, and to Blow up the Coals of *Contention* in the State, when we were moſt likely to Arrive at a firm and laſting Union amongſt our ſelves. Sir *Thomas Pope Blount*, tells us in his Eſſay on the great Miſchief and Prejudice of Learning, pag. 83. 'It is the general Obſervation of the moſt Faithful Hiſtorians, that the *Clergy* in all Ages have been the greateſt Promoters of thoſe Civil Diſtempers and Contentions that have every where ſhak'd the Foundations of *Church* and *State*; ſo that, as a *Catholick* Noted, there has been no Flood of Miſery, but did Spring from, or was much Swell'd by their *Holy-Water*. Thoſe *Torches* which ſhould have been for ſaving Lights, have Degenerated into Fire-Brands. Thoſe Trumpets which ſhould have Sounded Retreats to Popular Furies, have never known any other Muſick than *Martial Allarms*. But God defend our Pulpits from ſuch *Boutefeus*, as like *Ætna* and *Veſuvius*, Belch out nothing but Flames, and Fiery-Diſcourſes. Certainly if theſe Men ever expected to Merit Heaven, it muſt be by an *Antiperiſtaſis*: But, in a Word, when the Men of the *Long Robe* have once Preach'd the People to *Tinder*, the leaſt Spark then ſets them on Fire. And therefore, let any Man but Read the Hiſtory of *Chriſtendom*, and he will find that moſt of the Quarrels in this part of the World have ſprung from the *Pulpit*, and that the Clergy were the *Porcupuſes* that portended the Storm.

'Tis true, we have many of theſe Turbulent Spirits among us, but they are an inconſiderable Number to the many Moderate and Peaceable *Chriſtians*; and by a happy Union of theſe People of all Parties, we may be able to Defeat the United Powers of *Papiſts* and *Nonjurors*. As they are in a Confederacy againſt us, in denying Her Majeſties Right, as She is Head of the State and Church of *England*; ſo ought we to Unite in Defence of our Queen and Realm, and that in two reſpects, as we are *Proteſtants* of the ſame *Church*, and *Freemen* of the ſame *Country*.

I would not be thought to ſpeak too comprehenſively, when I ſay we are *all* Proteſtants of the ſame *Church*, for the Modes and Rituals of Religion cannot make a Religion differ from its Conſtitution any more than the Habit of a Man can make a Man differ from himſelf, and Human Nature: The moſt powerful part of the Diſſenters in *England* do own the Doctrinals of the Church, and if *Denominatio ſumitur a Majori*, then are they as good Church of *England*

land-*Men* as any others; for I hope the Doctrines and Substantials bear more Weight and Bulk in them, than the Modes and Ceremonies which are no Essential parts, but are Adventitious only to Religion. I hope a Garment does not take its Denomination from the Fringe or Trimming, which alters according to every Mans Fancy, and is not an Accident inspeparable from the Nature of the Garment. I need not preach up this Doctrine to such as are good *Christians* and *Englishmen*, they know the present Necessity of a good Understanding between the *Protestants* of all Parties; and I must tell the others, they are neither good *Protestants* nor *Englishmen*. Our Saviour never told you that you were no good *Church man*, unless you hated your Brother, which differ'd from you; and perhaps you keep up a Division, and are unreconciled to Men, who are reconcil'd to their God, and Saviour *Jesus Christ*, when your selves are not; for he Blesses the *Peace-makers*, and consequently the contrary are Curst.

Tho' the Coat of our Saviour was all of a piece, the Walls of his Churches, and the Covering of the Tabernacle, are of different Materials; some Stone, some Lime, some Sand, some Clay, some Cement, *&c.* Now if you take away any sort of these Materials, you not only Deface the Beautiful Church of Christ, but you make Flaws in its Walls, and must Answer another Day for the Dilapidations. Our Blessed Saviour is the Stock into which all true Christians are Grafted; and tho' as in Natural Trees, there may be different Grafts on the same Stock, yet they receive Spiritual Nourishment after the same manner, and are matur'd and ripen'd for the same End and Purpose, Eternal Glory.

The Walls of the Church of *England*, are Built and Compos'd of *Episcopalians*, *Presbyterians*, *Independents*, *Anabaptists*, *Quakers*, &c. all which are *Protestants*, and so on one and the same Bottom: Now these being the Stones of our Church, you cannot pick out any sort of these without endang'ring the whole Fabrick. Suppose the *Episcopalians* are the Pillars of the Church, the *Presbyterians* the Rafters to support the Roof, and every other Sect, in some manner or other, consistent parts of the Church. If you pull down the Pillars, the Church tumbles of course; if you take away the Rafters and Roof, the Pillars will have nothing to support, and consequently by the moisture of the Air and Rain will moulder and decay: Now every one of these Religious Parties being so very necessary towards the Support of the National Church, as being all *Protestants* and Enemies to the *Church* of *Rome*, they ought always to be in Amity and Friendship one with the other; for the common *Enemy*, the *Papists*, can contrive no better way of destroying our Church, than by making us destroy one another.

I know this Doctrine will not go down with such, who by our Divisions would mislead us by a false Scent from the pursuit of the common good; if these go on and be Damn'd, and are made Slaves 'tis none of I know whose Fault: But such as are indeed good Church of *England-Men*, under the Denomination of what Opinion soever, I am sure will be of my Mind; for other wise they are not good *Christians*: The great Author I before quoted, speaking of such Men, and of such Turbulent Spirits, i

' Let us not Deceive our selves, whatso
' some may think, this is not the Viole
' that gains Heaven: Nor is there any th
' which makes us more unlike God, who is
' Father of Mercies, and the God of all C
' solation, than a Furious, Hot, and Perse
' ting Spirit. His Appearance was in the
' and still Voice, not in Whirlwinds and H
' ricanes; where there is *Spiritus Procellæ*,
' may satisfie our selves it proceeds from a
' ther Principle. The Holy Ghost was pl
' fed to appear not in the Form of a *Vult*
' (a Ravenous and devouring Creature) t
' in the Shape of a *Dove*, the Emblem
' *Meekness*. The true Church is stiled by t
' Name of the *Lilly amongst Thorns*; the *Li*
' does not scratch and tear, that's the Propert
' of *Thorns* and *Briars*, the most inconsider
' ble part of Shrubs. And indeed let us
' flect who were the chief Promoters of o
' late Persecutions, and we shall find they we
' the slightest of the *Clergy*, and the most Pr
' fligate of the *Laity*; none being so fit to ma
' Shipwrack of other Mens Consciences, as the
' who have none of their own.

For Loving one another we have the Roy Authority of Heaven, but we are moved t Hatred by the Instigation of the Devil. *Lov* is a Passion of a Divine Extraction and Origi nal, and the more we Love one another, th more Lovely are we in the sight of our grea Creator. *Anger*, *Hatred*, and *Envy* are the Off spring of Hell, and Ascend from the dark Ca verns of the profound Abyss, to disturb the Harmony of the Terrestrial Globe: Men of Contentious and Persecuting Spirits, are of their Father the Devil, his Work they do, and he will pay them their Wages. The Actions of all good Christians will naturally Center in one Point, the common good of their Country, and the Peace and Tranquillity of the Church. True Religion has no sinister Ends and Aims, no Reserves of Secular Interest, it has no other views than that of our common Welfare, and the Honour and Glory of our common Saviour. He that is not a good *Englishman*, can never be a good Christian; he that will sell the Liberties of his Country for a *French* Government, and a *Popish* Successor, will sell a Crucify'd Saviour for a Wooden God; he that is not in Charity and Union with his Fellow Natives, who are Protestants, is shrewdly to be suspected to be in Love and Confederacy with *Papists*, *Jews* and *Infidels*, to the Ruin of the *English Constitution*. How hard soever the *Non-jurors* and *High-Flyers* may think of what I have said, these are Natural Consequences from the Premises, and Reasons drawn from Fundamental Principles.

Were we a People void of all Religion, yet as we are Men, Born to singular and Transcendent Immunities and Priviledges, we ought to encourage such a Union as I have spoken of, and without it, our Liberties will be always precarious to the Designs of self-Interested and Arbitrary Persons, which I could fully prove were it not time for us to be marching Homeward.

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